

SUNBEAM

Vol. XXVI.

TORONTO, MARCH 18, 1905.

No. 6.

AN ARCTIC EXPLORER.

Most boys, at one time or another, have the fever for adventure. To seek his fortune in strange countries, to sail upon unknown seas and travel over unknown lands, is the dream of many a schoolboy. And it is such a haunting dream to some that nothing but the reality can satisfy them. The in-born love of adventure discovered a new world for us in the days of Christopher Columbus, and has opened a way for the Gospel to enter into many of the dark places of the earth; but it has not yet discovered the North-west Passage, in spite of the expeditions into the frozen regions of the Arctic Ocean.

It may yet, some day—who knows when? Meanwhile, thanks to the brave men who have risked their lives in these expeditions, we have found out a great deal of interesting knowledge, and learned what heroic and unselfish things men can do in times of trial. Our picture shows us an Arctic explorer in his bear-skin suit. The gun by his side was probably the trusty one with which he shot the polar bear who furnished him a dinner as well as a coat, and who would have dined upon our adventure, perhaps, if fortune had turned the other way.



ARCTIC EXPLORERS.

There are many exciting stories told about these great white bears, and some that are funny. Who would expect to see the savage creatures enjoy the schoolboy frolic of coasting down a snowslide? But Dr. Kane tells us of an ice-covered rock whose steep slope was worn smooth by bears sliding down on their haunches. These same bears had made free with the

carefully-hidden provisions of one of the exploring parties. An enclosure of rocks had been made with great labor; and barrels of bread and cases of food of various sorts had been packed away for future needs. Nobody counted upon the cunning of the bears, or their great strength. But when the owners of the treasure came to seek it, it was clear that the bears had

made a visit. The great rocks were tumbled apart, iron cases crushed open, tin cans torn up like paper, bread barrels smashed in and emptied—even the "flag of our Union" put up to mark the spot, was torn down and gnawed to bits!

The same party had an uninvited visitor one night. They had made a halt upon the ice, in one of their journeys; and, being tired after a hard day's travel, were sound asleep in their tent. About midnight, one of the men was awakened by something scratching in the snow close by, and presently saw a huge white bear push his head through the tent opening. The frightened men sprang up; but there were no guns in reach; they had been left outside upon the sledge. They snapped lucifer matches, and lighted torches of newspaper under his nose to frighten the beast; but he took no notice. A dead seal, shot the day before, lay inside the tent, and the bear began to make supper of it. This gave time for a man to crawl out under the tent, snatch a rifle, and shoot him before the bear had time to defend himself.

The seal is another animal of great value to Arctic explorers. It is not a fierce creature, being easily frightened. When they come up from the water to sun themselves on the ice-fields they are shot without difficulty.

Arthur Jones is a bright boy of seven years old. He goes to Sunday-school, and he loves his books. He studies the lessons, and he answers his teacher's questions nicely. I think Arthur will become a good and useful man.